

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 106

By Smith

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Knoxville Police Officer Andrew Michael Keith upon receiving the Public Safety Medal of Valor.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective safety, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans have continued a time-honored tradition of public service as police officers, dedicating their time and efforts to protect those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, Officer Andrew Michael Keith of the Knoxville Police Department is one such outstanding public servant who received the Public Safety Medal of Valor from Vice President Joe Biden and Attorney General Eric Holder for rescuing a Tennessee state trooper from a fiery interstate crash on March 13, 2012, thereby saving the trooper's life; and

WHEREAS, on that day, Tennessee Highway Patrol Sergeant Lowell Russell parked his vehicle on the shoulder of Interstate 40 West with his emergency lights on to complete paperwork when a flatbed tractor-trailer smashed into his police cruiser around 2:50 a.m. The accident trapped Sergeant Russell inside the car and rendered him unconscious; and

WHEREAS, one of the first to approach the burning police cruiser, Knoxville Police Officer Keith contacted a dispatcher to send the fire department to the scene. He carefully used a shirt to beat back the flames as he tried to reach Sergeant Russell; and

WHEREAS, he positioned Sergeant Russell to keep the flames away from his body, while two citizens helped to cut the state trooper from his seatbelt. After freeing Sergeant Russell, Officer Keith took control of the scene and kept people away from the vehicle, which exploded from a discharge of ammunition; and

WHEREAS, outstanding in the line of duty, Officer Andrew Keith is a citizen of whom the Volunteer State can be most proud, and he should be recognized for his heroic act; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Officer Andrew Michael Keith of the Knoxville Police Department upon receiving the Public Safety Medal of Valor for heroism he displayed on March 13, 2012. We recognize Officer Keith as a paragon of virtue, efficiency, and professionalism, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.